

Proceedings of the United States National Museum



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION • WASHINGTON, D.C.

Volume 112

1960

Number 3441

WELCOME MOUND AND THE EFFIGY PIPES OF THE ADENA PEOPLE

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The expansion of the Columbia-Southern Chemical Corporation's Natrium Plant near New Martinsville, West Virginia, required removing two Adena Indian burial mounds on their property. The first, known as "Natrium Mound" (46Mr-2), was carefully excavated in 1948 by Ralph S. Solecki (Solecki, 1953); the second, "Welcome Mound" (named after the community "Welcome," 46Mr-3), was excavated by me in 1957.

Appreciating the need to preserve a detailed record of the contents of such prehistoric burial sites, Mr. C. E. Wolf, Plant Manager, notified the West Virginia Archeological Society and, through it, the Smithsonian Institution of the impending program of expansion. In addition, the Columbia-Southern Chemical Corporation, a subsidiary of the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, in 1948 and again in 1957 provided laborers, heavy and light machinery, and tools. The Smithsonian Institution provided the archeologists.

Adena People

Adena burial mounds are common in the Ohio River Valley region. It was not, however, until 1901 that the first Adena mound was excavated for historical purposes by William C. Mills of the Ohio State Museum (Mills, 1902). This mound was on the estate of Thomas Worthington (Governor of Ohio, 1814-18) in Ross County, a mile northwest of Chillicothe, Ohio. Governor Worthington gave the name "Adena" (probably from the Hebrew "Adinah") to his acreage on the west side of the Scioto River. Presumably he meant to imply "nothing lacking" or, freely translated, "paradise." The name "Adena" was adopted by archeologists to refer to the prehistoric Indians who built such mounds.

The middle section of the Ohio River flows through narrow, steep-sided valleys with hills rising 600 to 700 feet above the river. Level areas occur at various bends in the river, known as bottoms, one such being Grave Creek where one of the highest mounds in the United States is located, the famous Grave Creek Mound in the center of Moundsville, West Virginia.

The relatively wide, level areas periodically flooded by the Ohio River served as ideal village sites for these prehistoric people. The environment consisted of a river well-stocked with fish and mollusks, and with plenty of fresh water; heavily wooded hills that even now support deer, bear, and many other meat-producing animals; and sites for garden plots that were annually enriched by flood waters. Such an environment was probably an important factor in the transition of a nomadic group to a semisedentary one.

These ecological factors probably enabled a gathering, gardening, and hunting people to plant, cultivate, and store vegetables. They probably also depended on animals, fish, berries, and wild plants to supplement their diet. The large mounds that they built over the bodies of their dead are evidence that they remained in one place for a considerable time. It is not known how long it took them to build Welcome, Natrium, Cresap, or Grave Creek Mounds, which are all within a few miles of each other, for we do not know how many people worked on these mounds or what kinds of implements they used.

The prevalence of Adena mounds along the Ohio River and its tributaries in Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland suggests that this area (fig. 1) became one of the favored locations of these people between 800 B.C. and A.D. 800. Here many family groups apparently found an environment conducive to settle in and built a compact social organization. The mounds that they built probably honored certain deceased members of their tribe and served as protection for their remains.

The bodies were usually interred extended on their backs with personal belongings and ceremonial and political paraphernalia, and were surrounded by log and bark structures. The ceremonial objects buried with the deceased individual were probably regarded as contributing to his welfare in after life.

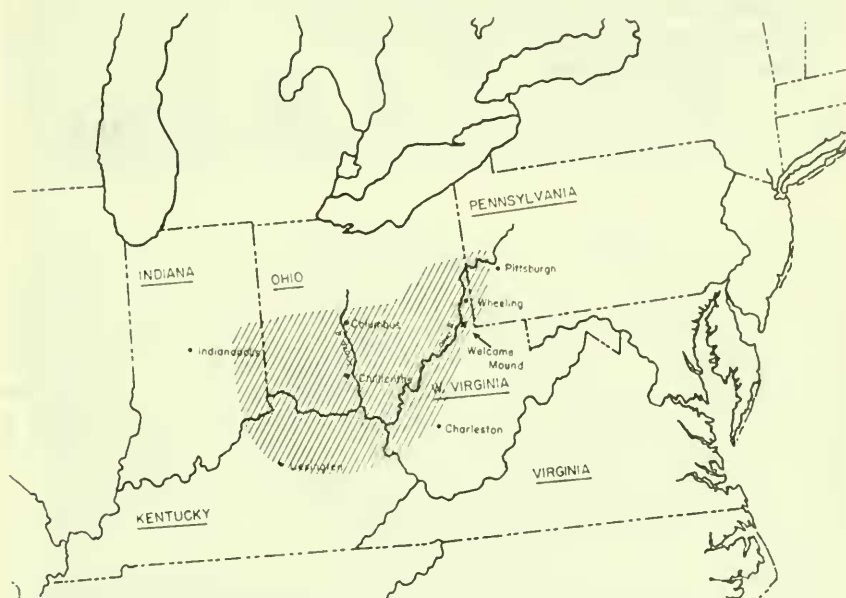


FIGURE 1—Map showing concentration of Adena sites in the Ohio River Valley region.

Welcome Mound

Erecting a tumulus as large as Welcome Mound was a considerable undertaking for these people. It measured about 110 feet in diameter and 14 feet at the highest point (plate 1). The hundreds of tons of dirt were composed of both the thin mantle of topsoil and surrounding humus and a loose gravelly soil, interspersed with water-worn pebbles ranging in size from a marble to elliptical biconvex pebbles 4 to 5 inches across. The composition was comparable to that found in the Natrium Mound, a mile to the south (Solecki, 1953, pp. 327, 382, 390). Such a mixture made it difficult for us to dig with shovels and trowels.

In contrast to some of the other large Adena mounds which contained the remains of many more bodies (Bache and Satterthwaite,

1930; Greenman, 1932; Webb and Snow, 1945; and Webb and Baby, 1957), Welcome Mound contained only three adult human skeletons. Two of the bodies were placed on the base near center. There were no pits or clay-lined tombs beneath the original surface of the ground as were found in the other mounds. The stratum of glacial gravels underlying the base probably discouraged such an operation by people limited to primitive tools of wood or stone. The badly decomposed skeletons were surrounded with the usual channels or molds, caused by decayed logs lying in various directions. Layers of bark and the residue of perishable things lay both beneath and over the skeletons.

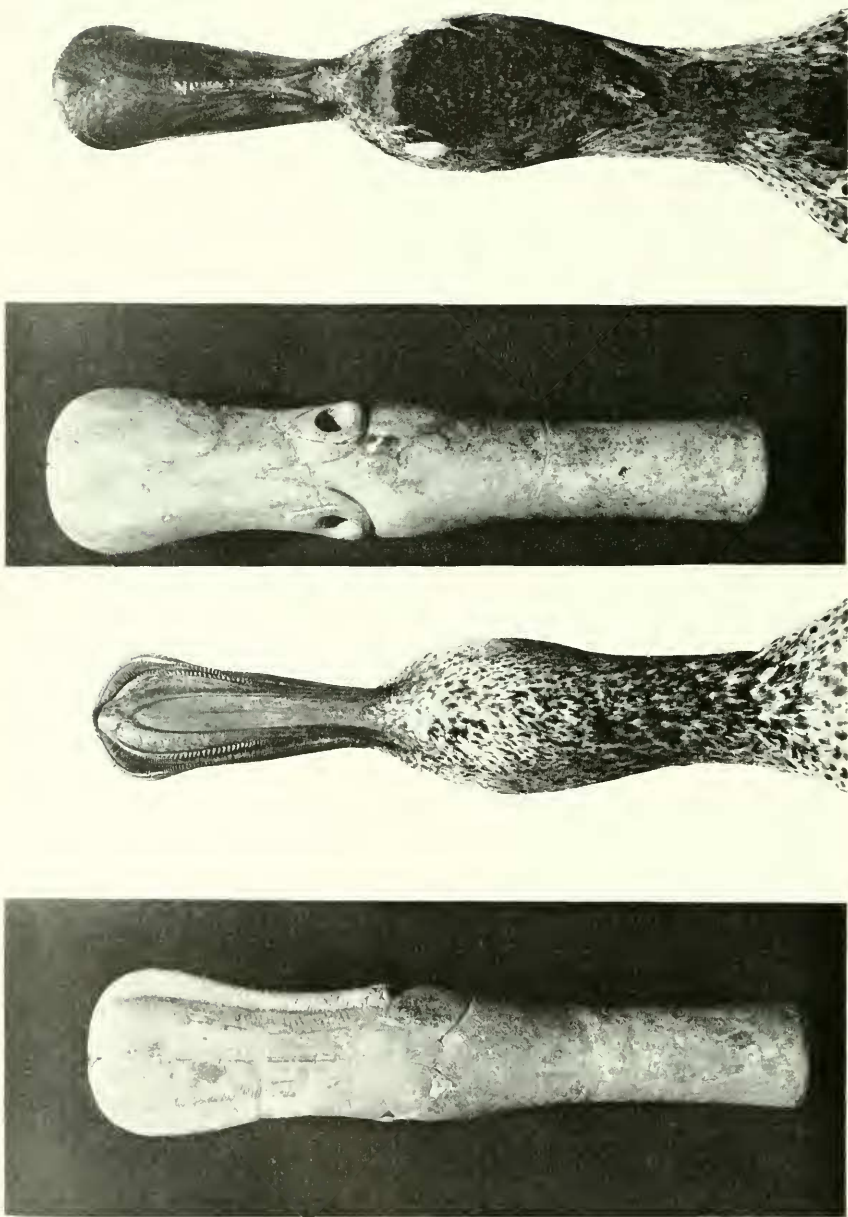
A mass of thick, coarse, grit-tempered potsherds and a handful of fresh-water mollusk shells were found on the same level within a few feet of the skeletons. After much effort to restore these hundreds of sherds, I was able to construct a large (over 1-foot high) barrel-shaped vessel with no neck or constriction and with a flat undecorated rim. The rim is $\frac{5}{16}$ inch thick, and the wall thickens down the side to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch near the rounded base. The outside surface, especially near the top, gives the appearance of smoothed-out cord marks. In color, it varies from a dark brownish grey at the top, through a pinkish tinge, to an off-white base. It is tempered with relatively large and coarse water-worn gravelly pebbles. It is not as heavy and crude as earlier Adena Fayette Thick pottery, but is in no way comparable to the decorated pottery of the contemporaneous Hopewell Indians, whose burial mounds are in the same general area. I am inclined to place the pottery somewhere between Early and Middle Adena periods.

In the mouth of skeleton No. 3 was found a large tooth (plate 1), subsequently identified as the canine tooth of the mountain lion, or cougar, *Felis concolor*. The tooth in this position would seem to be of little significance, but this finding must be correlated with a previous discovery. W. S. Webb and R. S. Baby in 1949 (Webb and Baby, 1957, pp. 61-71) found the front portion of the upper jaw of a wolf, cut in the form of a spatula, associated with a human skull in the Ayres Mound near New Liberty, Kentucky. This jaw, together with the six other known associations of bear, cougar, and wolf teeth, establishes an important ceremonial trait among these Adena people. Thanks to the meticulous work of Webb and Baby, we now know that the Adena people had men who served their society in a capacity comparable to that of a shaman, medicine man, or witch doctor.

The mountain lion tooth in the mouth of skeleton No. 3 therefore supports the belief that this skeleton is the remains of an important religious leader. He was probably buried in a costume that included an animal mask. If the bark and other discolorations surrounding



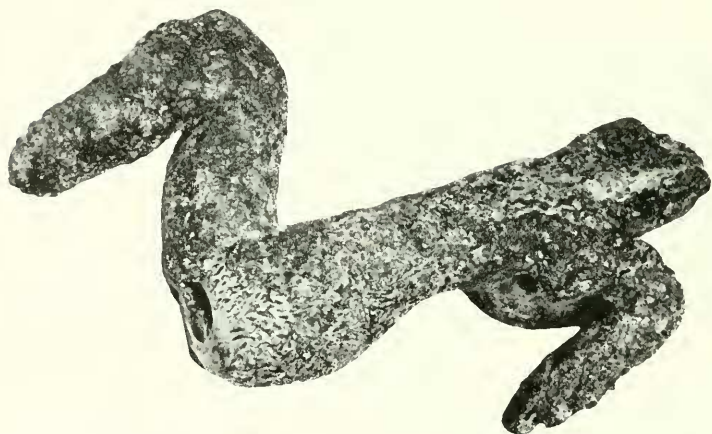
Welcome Mound, remains of skeleton No. 1 and the duck effigy pipe in situ, and remains of skeleton No. 3 and the canine tooth of a mountain lion.



The duck effigy pipe from Welcome Mound compared with the bill, head, and neck of a shoveler duck.



Human effigy pipe from the Adena Mound.



Other Adena pipes: Duck effigy from Englewood Mound, aquatic bird effigy and wolf effigy from Sayler Park Mound, and the more common plain pipe.